Thoreau Society Bulletin

ISSN 0040-6406 Number 258 Spring 2007

A Leaf from Thoreau's Fire Island Manuscript

Steve Grice

When E. Harlow Russell sold Houghton Mifflin and Company the rights to publish its 1906, twenty volume set, *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau*, he agreed to include 520 manuscript leaves in Thoreau's handwriting so that the publishing house could cut some in half and then mount and tip a manuscript fragment into the first volume of 620 Manuscript Edition sets and an undetermined number of Walden Edition sets in special bindings. Russell hired George S. Hellman, a New York book dealer, to sort through three trunks of Thoreau's manuscripts and cull 520 leaves of material that already had been published.[1]

Hellman, faced with the daunting tasks of deciphering Thoreau's handwriting, identifying the source of each fragment, and deciding which pages had the least value on the collectors' market, inadvertently included a few leaves that were not from rough drafts nor reading drafts connected to any of Thoreau's published works. For example, Manuscript Edition set number 588, which currently is in my possession, contains a two-sided, half-page manuscript fragment edited and published here for the first time. This fragment is the top half of another two-sided, half-page manuscript fragment which in 1938 was removed from Manuscript Edition set 518 to become page 18 of MA 920 in the Pierpont Morgan Library collection.[2] Both fragments are on very thin, lined paper with a greenish hue, and the widths match as does the color of the ink.[3] Brought together they become a leaf from an obviously longer, unpublished description by Thoreau of his July 1850 trip to Fire Island, New York, "to recover what remained of Margaret Fuller,"[4] who drowned in the shipwreck of the *Elizabeth* on a sandbar just off the island.[5] Reunited, the two fragments read as follows:

Set 588 fragment front (see illustration 1)

I found the engravings at
Oakes'.[6] They said that they
were left out of the trunk. The
gown and one article of the
child's dress at Daniel Jones',[7]
Patchogue[8]—and the other arti-
cle of the child's dress at John Hein-
ners in the same village. They
said that they picked them up 1 1/2
or 2 miles east of the wreck. There
were more things there and else-
where which were either not worth
taking—or not worth waiting to see.
I saw a calico dress like the

The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. MA 920, page 18 back (see illustration 2)

pattern which I bought at Skinners
It had silk fringes & was much torn
also some drawers and a night
gown all torn & without mark.
Elikom Jones agreed to
forward to Mr. Dominy[9] a lady's
shift which a Quorum[10] man had
got, & which he thought had the
letters S.M.F. on it.
At Carman Rowlands Patchogue
I saw a gentleman's shirt.
At Wm Gregory's in the same village
a cart load of rags & remains of a
childs petticoat. He said that
his brother had much more.

Set 588 fragment back (see illustration 3)

At Wm Smiths, near Patchogue
a childs striped apron & a lady's
skirt fringed.
Orrin Rose & Obadiah Greene of
Sayville[11] had something.

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Geo Curtis of Sayville—the skirt of a silk dress—"lilac ground, middling dark stripe" which I could not wait to get.

Mrs. Hasty[12] & the Captain[13] had left New York before I returned.

The only ones of the survivors who remained on board till the vessel broke

The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. MA 920, page 18 front (see illustration 4)

up are the Carpenter & the Cook.[14] I conversed with the former & the mate, but the Cook was not then to be found; he was the only American among the crew, and was the only one, they said who was unsteady—he was intoxicated most of the time on shore.

The following is the account of Charles W. Davis[15] 1st Mate—A Hanoverian, who went out from New Orleans.

They had pleasant weather up to latitude 58°, so that they painted

Obviously, these two pages were written after Thoreau's July 25, 1850, letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson in which he states, " Mrs. Hartz [Hasty] the Captain's wife ...who can tell all about Margaret up to 11 o'clock on Friday is said to be going to Portland Me. today....The cook, the last to leave, & the Steward? will know the rest. I shall try to see them. In the meantime I shall do what I can to recover property & obtain particulars here abouts."[16] Since this leaf gives a detailed list of the "property" Thoreau saw and heard about at the wreck site and then begins describing the "particulars" he learned from interviewing survivors, it may well belong to the unpublished report Thoreau read to Emerson, Emerson's wife Lidian, and Elizabeth Hoar upon his return to Concord.[17] After all, it was Emerson who had sent him to Fire Island "to go, on all our parts, & obtain on the wrecking ground all the intelligence &, if possible, any fragments of manuscripts or other property."[18] It would only be natural for Thoreau to give just such an accounting of what he had found there to the man who had paid his expenses.[19] At any rate, there is a very good chance that one or more other leaves of this manuscript were cut in half, tipped into other Thoreau sets, and are waiting in private collections or attics to be reunited with these two pages. We can only hope that they have not been lost at sea.[20]

[1]Bradley P. Dean, "Reconstructions of Thoreau's Early 'Life without Principle' Lectures," in *Studies in the American Renaissance 1987*, ed. Joel Myerson (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987), 303-304.

[2]See the handwritten note on MA 920, page 18 front. For the initial publication of the Pierpont Morgan fragment, see Kenneth Walter Cameron, "Thoreau's Notes on the Shipwreck at Fire Island," *ESQ* 52 (1968): 97-99. I want to thank Inge Dupont, Marilyn Palmeri, and Eva Soos of the Pierpont Morgan Library staff for all their help.

[3]The journal Thoreau was keeping at the time he visited Fire Island (MA 1302:9), also in the Pierpont Morgan collection, has thirty-two pages removed, none of which have been located. I originally suspected that the reunited leaf might have been removed from the journal. However, I examined the fragments and the journal side by side at Pierpont Morgan and discovered that the paper used for the fragments is much thinner than the journal paper. See "Textual Introduction," in *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau Journal Volume 3: 1848-1851*, ed. Robert Sattelmeyer, Mark R. Patterson, and William Rossi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 502.

[4]Henry David Thoreau to H. G. O. Blake, 1850 in *The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau*, eds. Walter Harding and Carl Bode (New York: New York University Press, 1958), 264.

[5]For contemporary descriptions of the final voyage of the *Elizabeth*, the shipwreck, and the immediate aftermath see (1) W. H. Channing, "Homeward," in *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, vol. 2, eds. R. W. Emerson, W. H. Channing, and J. F. Clarke (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Co., 1852), 333-352. (2) Arthur B. Fuller, "Homeward," in *At Home and Abroad; or, Things and Thoughts in America and Europe* by Margaret Fuller Ossoli (Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Co., 1856), 443-455. This section includes Bayard Taylor's description of the wreck site that was originally published in the *New York Tribune*, July 24, 1850, p.4. (3) Henry David Thoreau to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1850, in Thoreau, *Correspondence*, 262-263. (4) Arthur Dominy to Mrs. Parker Pruyn, 1901, an unpublished letter in the Linseth Suffrage Collection at Cornell University, a collection that, as of this writing has not been catalogued. Dominy was the son of Felix Dominy, the Fire Island lighthouse keeper at the time of the wreck, whom Thoreau mentions in MA 920, page 18 back. For a modern evaluation of the wreck see John Rousmaniere, *After the Storm: True Stories of Disasters and Recovery at Sea* (Camden, Maine: International Marine/McGraw Hill, 2002), 25-58. Charles Capper's *Margaret Fuller: An American Romantic Life: The Public Years*, soon to be published by Oxford University Press, will be another good source.

[6]Thoreau wrote to Emerson, "I am writing this at the house of Smith Oakes, within one mile of the wreck. He is the one who rendered the most assistance." Thoreau, *Correspondence*, 262. When rescued, Mrs. Hasty was taken to the Oakes home as was the body of Fuller's son, Angelino. Fuller, *At Home*, 446. A month after the wreck Oakes and six other men "were charged, at the United States Marshal's office...with having in their possession property belonging to the ship Elizabeth, wrecked at Fire Island...and bail was entered for their appearance at the September term." "Fire Island Wreckers," *New York Tribune*, August 9, 1850, p. 2. I have been unable to discover the outcome of these charges.

[7]Jones was one of the other six men charged along with Oakes. "Wreckers," p. 2.

[8]Patchogue is located on the southern shore of Long Island just across the water from Fire Island. In an undated journal entry from the same time period as the wreck, Thoreau describes his encounter with a drunken Dutch sailor on a boat ride to Patchogue. See Thoreau, *Journal Vol. 3*, 99-100. This entry probably describes the trip Thoreau is anticipating when he writes to Emerson on July 25, 1850, "I expect to go to Patchogue whence the pilferers must have chiefly come & advertise &c &c." Thoreau, *Correspondence*, 263.

[9]See endnote 5 (4).

[10]"Quorum" is Coram, eight miles north of Patchogue.

[11]Sayville is another village on Long Island's southern shore, facing Fire Island.

[12]Catherine Hasty was the wife of Seth Hasty, the original captain of the *Elizabeth* when it sailed from Leghorn, Italy. He died of smallpox while the ship was quarantined in the harbor of Gibraltar. Fuller's son, Angelino, was the only other person on board to catch the disease and recovered only to die a few days later in the shipwreck. Channing, "Homeward," 339-340.

[13]The Captain referred to here is Henry P. Bangs, who originally was the first mate and assumed command when Hasty died. For a discussion of the mistakes that Bangs made which led to the shipwreck see Rousmaniere, *After the Storm*, 54-58.

[14]The carpenter and the cook were two of the last four crew members who stayed with Fuller on the wreck until it broke up. Channing, "Homeward," 348. In one account it was the cook who reported Fuller's final words, "I see nothing but death before me,—I shall never reach shore." Fuller, *At Home*, 446.

[15]Davis performed several heroic acts during the wreck, including saving Mrs. Hasty's life twice. Channing, "Homeward," 344-346.

[16]Thoreau, *Correspondence*, 262.

[17]Ralph L. Rusk, *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), 378.

[18]Ralph Waldo Emerson to Horace Greeley, 1850, in *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ralph L. Rusk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 4:219.

[19]Rusk, *Life*, 262.

[20]If you own a Thoreau manuscript fragment that seems to fit with this leaf or one that you don't think has been published, please contact The Thoreau Textual Center at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Their website is at www.library.ucsb.edu/thoreau/index.html.

Illustration 1

Illustration 2

Illustration 3

Illustration 4

To Set This World Right, A Review

Albert J. von Frank

Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006. 233 p. $29.95.

In focusing on the Concord Female Antislavery Society (CFAS) and its leading light, Mary Merrick Brooks, Sandra Petrulionis has produced a worthy addition to the burgeoning scholarship on the contributions of rank and file women to the abolitionist crusade. Building on the pioneer work of Alma Lutz and Gerda Lerner, scholars including Lori Ginzberg, Debra Gold Hansen, Julie Roy Jeffrey, Anna Speicher, Deborah Bingham Van Broekhoven, Wendy Venet, Jean Fagan Yellin, and Susan Zaeske have shown how often and to what effect the elite male-dominated antislavery clerisy faced its audience through female mediation and how antislavery activism, in giving a public forum for women's sympathies and concerns, provided a crucial impetus to the long, slow-motion revolution in the social and political position of women.

In many respects Concord illustrates typical patterns, clearly showing, for instance, that among the white population women were decidedly beforehand in taking strong antislavery positions, including a defining commitment to work together to advance the cause as publicized by William Lloyd Garrison. Interestingly, the CFAS was organized in October 1837 in the wake of stirring lectures by Sarah and Angelina Grimké, so that it had the instigation of that model of female social intervention, yet the Society, like the Grimké sisters, was then and would long continue ideologically hand in glove with Garrison and the *Liberator*. The women's most immediate purpose was to shape local opinion, and so, proposing to make the best use of the newly established lyceum, they pressured its male directors to invite appropriate speakers, including, frequently (and at first controversially), Wendell Phillips. In the early years they were also deeply involved in petitioning Congress and, then and always, in raising money for the New England Anti-Slavery Society, most notably by sponsoring antislavery fairs.

But Concord was of course not just any place: from its inception the CFAS included on its roster the wife of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the mother, sisters, and aunt of Henry David Thoreau as well as numerous friends and neighbors like Elizabeth Hoar, Anna and Louisa Whiting, and the indefatigable Mrs. Brooks. To the extent that antislavery was a public and civic issue in antebellum Concord, it would seem to have been owing to the women, who set the agenda and organized the debate. For the first time, then, we are here allowed to see the antislavery positions of Emerson and Thoreau in a specifically local and at the same time a markedly gendered context; in short, we are invited to assess the hesitations and engagements of the two leading transcendentalists from a new angle. This perspective has an appropriately defamiliarizing effect and offers an overdue supplement to such older studies as have centered on transcendentalist reform writings in a context of the national (and therefore mainly androcentric) history of the antislavery movement.

Grounding the perspective in this way allows Petrulionis some interesting new insights, including brief but persuasive speculations regarding the influence on Thoreau of Wendell Phillips and Nathaniel P. Rogers, antislavery figures especially approved by the women of his acquaintance. Thoreau's personal involvement in providing assistance to a few fugitives as they passed through Concord gave him a closer view of the subject than Emerson ever got. The lectures on "Slavery in Massachusetts" (1854) and "A Plea for Captain John Brown" (1859) resonated more satisfactorily with the CFAS membership than did the more abstract and philosophical "Civil Disobedience" (1848), a fact that for Petrulionis suggests an admirable conformity in the later performances to values and modalities typical of female antislavery. That these relatively understudied lectures lack the academic prestige of the earlier classic statement may hint at a masculinist bias in traditional critical estimates. It is an interesting implication of Petrulionis's narrative that Emerson, Thoreau, and the CFAS were in closest agreement during the John Brown excitement, when, as if to illustrate the mysteries of the moral nature, the actual shedding of blood was more to everybody's liking than Garrison's pacifism.

The main business of the book is to recover the buried history of the CFAS, its activities and personalities, and, through that, to get a clearer picture of what Concord—and mainly its women—actually did in the antislavery struggle. There are indications that the source materials are at certain points a little thin, especially for the crucial decade of the 1850s when much antislavery activity had been criminalized by the Fugitive Slave Law (see pp. 74-75), and yet enough survives for purposes of coherent narrative. The foregrounding of that narrative, however, in this relatively brief monograph, leaves less room than one might have wished for sustained interpretation or for a fully satisfactory working out of the relation between the CFAS and the writers. In this regard, certain tantalizing hints go undeveloped and several of the author's summary conclusions—especially in regard to Emerson—seem inadequately established.

Clearly the most salient fact about the CFAS is that it was a women's group at a particular point in American social history, which means that its radicalism would have been the product of a negotiation between its stated liberatory aims and whatever traditional constraints it wished (or felt compelled) to respect. In other words, it created for itself a feminist culture of a certain sort, which would have been reacted to, positively or negatively, by Emerson, Thoreau, and other male Concordians not exclusively in terms of its antislavery ideology, but in terms also, as it were, of its associated style. It is striking that the CFAS, with its originating debt to the Grimké sisters, produced no female speakers or writers; indeed there is some indication that it was a little antithetical to those vocations. At an early date, for example, Mary Moody Emerson urged Lidian to "invite" her husband "to leave the higher Muses" and enter into "living degraded misery [so as to] take the gauge of slavery" (p. 15). This is not far from what Mrs. Brooks had done, whose entire lack of literary culture (she read only antislavery tracts) had been lamented by Ann Warren Weston. It had been Aunt Mary's canny view that Waldo had "done enough" already for the "great" men in his recent lecturing and needed now a finer sense of the unfashionable social gospel of Christianity. The women's culture of the CFAS stressed just this religious position, not as against the spiritual emphasis in transcendentalism but rather, following Garrison, as against the cold formality of the orthodox churches. Petrulionis's narrative gives fascinating and tantalizing hints that there was a deep

satisfaction for the women in the antinomian style of their antislavery: thus, for example, when Anne Weston visited Mrs. Brooks the pair liked nothing more than to spend the evening "abusing ministers" (p. 28). They knew, as Anne Hutchinson had known before them, just who the unconverted clergy were. Male leadership, so far as the CFAS were concerned, was being transferred from hometown Unitarians like Ezra Ripley and Barzillai Frost to antislavery hierophants from Boston like Garrison and Phillips. It was a movement out of the church and into heresy, a position quite familiar to women in a patriarchal society and such as Emerson and Thoreau would have approved. This was heady stuff. As Concord's Charles S. Robinson ("Warrington") tells us, Garrison's escalating attack on the American churches led to an early schism in the CFAS, leaving behind only the most independent and nontraditional Christian women to trust to their own judgment and do the work.

On the other hand, there were aspects of the women's reform culture that might be supposed to have lessened the likelihood of its exerting a strong influence on Thoreau and, perhaps especially, on Emerson. The cultural distance between men and women at this time had partly to do with the fact that men had voting rights and women did not, which meant, on the one hand, that men like Nathan Brooks and Samuel Hoar were not so much "conservative" as deeply "political" in their personal approach to things, while, on the other hand, women were apt to receive it as a gesture of solidarity when Garrisonian abolitionists voluntarily unsexed themselves in renouncing the franchise on moral grounds. Petrulionis very interestingly suggests that Garrison's nonresistance made such organizing headway with the Concord women because it was, from the start, an inviting, feminized approach to the world's problems. This may have been all the more significant in light of the women's voluntary care to align their efforts with notions of domesticity. That their most visible public activity was a grand antislavery Tea Party at which Mrs. Brooks's famous currant-laced sugar cookies made their invariable appearance or that their most conspicuous relation to the free-state forces in Kansas involved their sewing circle gives point to the remark quoted from Julie Jeffrey that antislavery offered women an opportunity "to create a moral identity that was both rooted in and separate from [their] familial identity" (21). Such comments are not meant to belittle the women's efforts (the fugitive slaves who benefited from the monies raised would not permit it), but rather to suggest that a full recognition of how male and female cultures differed under traditions of patriarchal constraint is required if one wishes to assess, for example, how and with what irony Emerson and Thoreau might have reacted to the ambitiously announced purpose of the CFAS to "turn our world of sin and misery into a world of purity, holiness, and happiness" (p. 7).

Thoreau on John Brown, October 22, 1859

I do not wish to kill or to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both of these things would be by me unavoidable.

Captain Slocum

Bob Maker

In the summer of 1856, Henry Thoreau paid a visit to his friend Daniel Ricketson in New Bedford, Massachusetts. One of their day trips was a horse-and-buggy ride through the adjacent town of Fairhaven and down Sconticut Neck, a long peninsula extending into Buzzards Bay. Thoreau's journal for June 26 includes the following:

> Talked with a farmer by name of Slocum, hoeing on the Neck, a rather dull and countrified fellow for our neighborhood, I should have said. Asked him, by chance, about getting to Cuttyhunk, if it was safe to cross the bay in a whale-boat. Yes, or "Ye-e-s," his boat was only some twelve feet long and went over two or three times a year. His relations lived there. Perhaps he understood navigating here. Well, he 'd been round the world considerably. "Have you been master of a whaler?" Yes; he 'd been to most all parts of the world (*Journal of Henry D. Thoreau*, ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen [New York: Dover, 1962], 1027-1028).

With no first name given, identifying Captain Slocum presents some challenges. The Slocum family has a long history in southeastern Massachusetts, going back to 1637 when Anthony Slocum was one of a group who purchased "Cohannet," or Taunton, from Massasoit. Hundreds of Slocums have inhabited the region since that time; many were mariners, including several captains. But Thoreau provides some clues: Captain Slocum was living on Sconticut Neck, Fairhaven, in 1856. He had been around the world as captain of a whaler. He had relatives on Cuttyhunk, one of the islands in Buzzards Bay.

A map of Fairhaven, surveyed by H. F. Walling in 1855, shows a handful of houses on Sconticut Neck. At the very tip of the neck is one labeled "C. Slocum." Crew lists, originally kept at the New Bedford Customs House and now housed at the New Bedford Free Public Library, show only one Captain Slocum with first initial "C." This is Captain Charles Slocum. Records show three voyages he made. The first was on the ship *Brandt* out of New Bedford, from August 24, 1833, to March 17, 1835. Charles Slocum is listed as being from the town of Dartmouth, 21 years old, 5' 6 ¼" tall, with light complexion and sandy hair. The next trip was on the ship *Seine* of New Bedford, from January 5, 1848, to March 15, 1850. Charles Slocum is listed as "mate," with a lay of $^1/_{40}$, meaning that his pay would be one fortieth of the profits (after expenses) of the trip. Finally, he is listed as "master" on the bark *Cossack* out of New Bedford from October 8, 1850 to May 10, 1853, with a lay of $^1/_{14}$.

These records agree with information in a Slocum family genealogy for Charles Slocum, born in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, on September 3, 1811. Comparing census record from 1855 and 1860 with this family genealogy clinches the identification: Charles Slocum is the man Thoreau met in Fairhaven. The town of Chilmark is on Martha's Vineyard, but until 1864 it also included Cuttyhunk and the rest of the Elizabeth Islands. Fortunately, the 1860 federal census shows which "Chilmark" residents were actually living on Cuttyhunk. The 34 residents on Cuttyhunk in 1860 included Charles Slocum's sister, Mary (Slocum) Allen, her husband Holder Allen, and their nine children. Charles Slocum's cousin George Slocum and his wife and child also lived on Cuttyhunk at this time.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum has Captain Slocum's logbook for his voyage on the *Cossack*. It shows that the *Cossack* spent time whaling in the South Atlantic, South Pacific, and Arctic Ocean. The *Cossack* made three stops in Hawaii and one in Hong Kong. The ship came home with 56 barrels of spermaceti, 1,153 barrels of whale oil, and 12,900 pounds of whale bone.

Thoreau mentions Captain Slocum again in his journal the day after they met. Thoreau and Ricketson had taken an excursion to Naushon Island on the steamship *Eagle's Wing*. Naushon is another of the Elizabeth Islands chain in Buzzards Bay. During this trip they got into a discussion with some other passengers about Bartholomew Gosnold's exploration of the Elizabeth Islands in 1602, and especially about the location of Gosnold's fort. Gosnold had intended to start a settlement in the "North parts of Virginia," and to this end he and his men had built a "fort and place of abode" on "Elizabeth's Island." Three weeks later, faced with limited supplies and debate about splitting the profits from their cargo of sassafras, they abandoned their fort and returned to England. But where was Gosnold's "Elizabeth Island"? There has long been a debate about whether this referred to Cuttyhunk or Naushon. Thoreau's journal says:

> Cuttyhunk was very plain. Congdon said that he was there about thirty years ago, but could see no traces of Gosnold there, and does not believe there are any. Captain Slocum (of the day before), who has relations there, never saw any. Mr. Wall said that there was one old gentleman still alive, a Mr. Howland, who went on there with Belknap, who could tell all about it (*Journal of Henry D. Thoreau*, 1028-1029).

"Belknap" refers to Jeremy Belknap, founder of the Massachusetts Historical Society. In the first volume of his *American Biography* (1794), Belknap gives his opinion that Gosnold's fort was on Naushon. But then in 1797 Belknap visited Cuttyhunk in person and saw evidence which caused him to change his mind. He states, "We had the supreme satisfaction to find the cellar of Gosnold's store-house . . ." (*American Biography*, vol. 2, 1798). According to Daniel Ricketson's *History of New Bedford* (1858), "Mr. Howland" is James Howland, who actually went to Cuttyhunk to look for traces of Gosnold in 1817, not with Belknap in 1797. Ultimately Belknap, Howland and Ricketson all came to believe that Gosnold built his fort on Cuttyhunk. But the matter is not settled. Harold Wilson and William Carr have presented a detailed examination of the evidence, making the case that the location was on Naushon.

Returning to Captain Slocum, there is no indication that he made any more voyages after 1853. Census records show that he was still living on Sconticut Neck in 1860 with his wife Lucy and his daughter Lucy Jane. His wife died in 1864, and he moved back to Dartmouth, where he was born. The Beers & Co. Atlas of Bristol County (1871) shows him living in a house overlooking the Slocum's River. This house is still standing today. The 1880 census shows him living there with his daughter and her husband. Captain Charles Slocum died there in 1885.

In the end, Thoreau's "dull and countrified fellow" turns out to have been a man of substantial experience and accomplishment, with very deep roots in his community.

I would like to thank Paul Cyr of the New Bedford Free Public Library and Michael Dyer and Laura Pereira of the New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library for their assistance.

Remembering Thoreau

Over the years devotees of Henry David Thoreau have remembered the Thoreau Society in major gifts or legacies. The Board of Directors wishes to encourage others in a position to do so to consider the Society in their wills or through charitable remainder trusts.

Individuals will want to consult their estate or legal advisors for making such arrangements. Since the Society is a non-profit organization, substantial tax benefits might accrue.

From Thoreau's Journal, July 7, 1851

With a certain wariness, but not without a slight shudder at the danger oftentimes, I perceive how near I had come to admitting into my mind the details of some trivial affair, as a case at court— And I am astonished to observe how willing men are to lumber their minds with such rubbish—

The Date(s) and Context of Thoreau's Visit to Brook Farm

Edmund A. Schofield

Until 1998, when Sterling F. Delano reported that a letter to Emerson from George Partridge Bradford (1807–1890) shows unequivocally that Henry Thoreau visited Brook Farm in December 1843,[1] there had been no firm documentation of such a visit. Dated "Brook Farm Dec 12, 1843," a Tuesday, the letter begins, "Dear Waldo, I have been troubled at my want of hospitality in letting Henry Thoreau go away last week in the midst of the snowstorm; and have had fears that he may have suffered in his throat in consequence."[2]

When he visited Brook Farm, Thoreau was returning to New York from Concord, having just spent the Thanksgiving holiday with his family; through what must have been a misunderstanding, however, Bradford thought that Thoreau was on his way to Concord, not New York. Thus, in his anxiety over the threat to Thoreau's health, Bradford later that day "called at the Concord stage office [almost certainly in Boston] but found the coach had gone and so could not learn whether he suffered."[3] If Thoreau did suffer while traveling in the storm, it would almost certainly have been on a train heading to New York City—or in some drafty railroad waiting room in Boston—not on a stagecoach to Concord. Given the perennially precarious state of Thoreau's health, Bradford's "want of hospitality" could have had serious consequences for Thoreau.[4]

Delano dates Thoreau's visit to (or, to be more precise, his departure *from*) Brook Farm as "approximately nine days" earlier—that is, December 3, 1843. Abundant contemporary weather data make it certain, however, that the visit ended on Thursday, December 7th, only five days before Bradford wrote.

Emerson himself was traveling at the time, having lectured in Providence on December 6th and in nearby Woonsocket, R. I., on either December 5th or 7th. The evidence for this is in a letter of Friday morning, December 8th, to his wife, Lidian, which Emerson wrote in Boston while en route to Newburyport.[5] He does not mention the storm in the letter but does report having been "at Woonsocket *safely*, & *safely* at Providence" (emphases added), quite likely in allusion to the dangers of the storm. Exactly where Thoreau was that Friday morning—stranded in Boston or somewhere between there and New York, or actually in New York—has not yet been determined. He might even unknowingly have crossed paths with Emerson in Rhode Island.

Delano may have suggested Sunday, December 3rd, as the date of the visit because that is the day on which Thoreau is believed to have left Concord to go back to Staten Island, where he had been tutoring William Emerson's son.[6] From Concord, Thoreau would have traveled first to Boston and thence to New York City, the latter (and far longer) leg of his trip by train, the first leg (Concord to Boston) by stagecoach.[7] It was during a layover in Boston that he would have visited nearby Brook Farm.

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Concord, MA 01742

At least six dependable records of Boston's weather exist for December 1843, those of Robert Ball Edes, Jonathan Patten Hall, Robert Treat Paine, James Jackson, Dr. Enoch Hale, and an unnamed observer.[8] All show unequivocally that the snowstorm Bradford mentions occurred on Thursday, December 7, 1843. They make no mention of snow on any other day of that week during daylight hours.[9] In addition, published and manuscript records for six other locations amply confirm the data for Boston: those for Watertown, Framingham, Lowell, East Bridgewater, and Worcester, Massachusetts; and for Norwich, Connecticut.[10] There were meteorological observers in many other places throughout New England as well, whose records almost certainly would corroborate the data for Boston and the other places just mentioned. Together, the combined data would show the full extent and intensity of the storm, particularly in the area through which Thoreau would have traveled. In addition to the records of meteorological observers, newspaper reports in Boston and elsewhere give a similar, but broader perspective on the scope and intensity of the storm.

Meteorological Data

According to James Jackson, who took his observations at 6 Pemberton Square in Boston, it had begun snowing "before daylight (about 2 or 3)" and continued snowing throughout the day (December 7th), "[growing] fair about midn't." The anonymous observer at the State House recorded that the "[s]torm began at 6 A.M.," however, and "ended at 12 P.M.," as did Dr. Hale. Neither Edes nor Hall indicates the times at which the storm began or ended. Together, however, these records show that the storm was confined to one day, December 7th.

A Worcester observer working 32.5 miles west of West Roxbury states that the "Snow commenced at 12 at night," accumulating to a depth of eight inches.[11] Leonard Hill noted in his diary that it "Snowed all day" in East Bridgewater, twenty miles south-southeast of West Roxbury.[12] In Lowell, twenty-six miles north of West Roxbury, the Reverend Theodore Edson records that it was "A Snowy day." On Friday morning in Lowell "The ground [was] covered with snow and [there was] a bright sun. The sleighs [were] going merrily."[13]

Hale—who was comparing precipitation data for two heights at each of three sites in Boston (7.3 miles northeast of West Roxbury), as well as for Roxbury itself and for Norwich, Connecticut (about 75 miles southwest of West Roxbury)—records that the storm began in Norwich at midnight on December 6th–7th and ended twenty-four hours later, at midnight on December 7th–8th. A total of six inches fell in Norwich. Hale's entry for Roxbury mentions 1.90 inches of "rain," but this actually refers to the amount of melted snow, since the other records in this volume (for the three sites in Boston) are expressed as amount of "rain" (that is, melted snow). Thus, along the southern coast of New England, in Rhode Island and Connecticut, the storm would have been raging at exactly the time Thoreau would have been passing through, en route to New York City—had any train been able to make its way through the snow, that is.

Edes records a "heavy snowstorm; 13-1/2 in. fell." Hale states that 12 inches of snow fell, while Paine records "Snow (8 inch) all day & evening." Paine also records atmospheric pressure, with the lowest value, 29.40 inches (reduced to 50° F), occurring at ten o'clock in the evening of December 7th.[14] Thus, the storm was not at its height until some twelve or more hours after Thoreau left Brook Farm.

Newspaper Accounts

Newspapers in Boston, Providence, Worcester, Hartford, New York, and elsewhere carried reports on the storm that complement the meteorological records.

On Thursday evening the Boston *Evening Transcript*[15] reported that, "Snow is falling and sleigh bells are jingling quite merrily today."

The next evening the *Transcript*[16] carried the following news of the storm (in part quoting from the *Journal of Commerce*):

> Snow, commenced falling early last evening, and has continued most of the time since. It is now 3 or 4 inches deep. The wind has hauled to the westward, from which we infer that the storm is about over. [Journal of Commerce of last evening.]
>
> Snow commenced falling hereabout yesterday morning between 2 and 3 o'clock, and continued until a late hour last night. We have a clear sky today, however, and snow enough to make first rate sleighing. . . .

The Boston *Daily Advertiser*[17] of Saturday, December 9th, reported that

> The snow storm of Thursday cleared off at 1 or 2 o'clock at night, and was followed by fine weather through the day yesterday. The snow fell in this vicinity to the depth of 8 or 10 inches. . . . The rail roads on Thursday afternoon were considerably obstructed.—The afternoon [eastbound] train from Springfield, on the Western Railroad, reached Worcester at 8 o'clock, but the snow was so much accumulated on the [Boston–]Worcester Road, that it did not reach Boston until 6 o'clock yesterday [that is, Friday] morning.

The Providence *Journal* of Saturday, December 9th, quoted the Boston *Daily Advertiser* to the effect that,

> "We were on Thursday indulged with a regular old fashioned snow storm. The snow began to fall at about two o'clock in the morning, and continued steadily throughout the day and to a late hour last night. It must have accumulated to a very considerable depth."[18]

On Friday, the Hartford *Courant*[19] noted that, "Snow fell on Wednesday evening, and from Thursday morning early, it continued without intermission until our paper went to press."

The New York *Daily Tribune*[20] on Friday reported that

> The Acadia [had] arrived in Boston shortly after the departure of the cars, and hence the Foreign News could not have been received here in time for the regular Morning Papers but for the enterprise of the Proprietor of The Sun. By running an Express through in the midst of the storm yesterday, he has enabled us to give the news at an earlier date this morning.

On December 11th, the *Tribune* carried the following information from a letter dated "Washington, Friday Evening, Dec. 8":

> The snow-storm of yesterday extended as far South as this City, and farther. The afternoon Train from Philadelphia, which should have reached Baltimore at 1 or 2 this morning, got in a little before 1. I staid over in Philadelphia, where some attempts at sleighing were made last evening.—All the Eastern Shore of Maryland was covered with snow through to-day, but there is less this side of Baltimore.[21]

One can only speculate what misery Thoreau must have experienced on his long, snowy trip to New York during the same period of time!

Given the fact that Thoreau left Concord three or four days before he left Brook Farm in West Roxbury, a near-suburb of Boston less than twenty air miles from Concord, there is the distinct possibility that Thoreau was at Brook Farm for parts of three or four days, leaving, or trying to leave Boston by train for New York on the day of the snowstorm.[22] At the very least, we can now say with complete confidence that Thoreau was at Brook Farm during the night of December 6–7, 1843, and can plausibly conjecture that he had stayed there during the previous two or three nights.

Related Events at Fruitlands

December 1843 was also the month that saw the demise of Bronson Alcott's utopian experiment at Fruitlands in the town of Harvard, Massachusetts. During the previous summer, on the Fourth of July, Emerson and Ellery Channing had visited Alcott and his family there. In his Journal entry of July 8th, Emerson had famously written, "They look well in July. We will see them in December."[23]

Significantly, perhaps, Alcott's associate at Fruitlands, Charles Lane, wrote to Emerson on December 18th asking Emerson to take over Fruitlands as his agent. Emerson replied promptly in the affirmative, whereupon Lane wrote "to May, asking him to execute a transfer deed to Emerson."[24]

In *Pedlar's Progress* Odell Shepard describes the demise of Fruitlands as follows:

> At some time in the first week of January, 1844—one record indicates the second and another the sixth of that month—Charles Lane [who had owned Fruitlands] and his son William left Fruitlands and went to live at the Shaker Village. On the fourteenth of January the Alcotts also left the house, taking three rooms and a kitchen at the home of a neighbor in the village of Still River. The adventure at Fruitlands and Bronson Alcott's career as a reformer had come to an ignominious close.[25]

Perhaps it was the snowstorm of December 7th that pushed the Fruitlands experience over the brink. In any case, Thoreau was back in Concord by December 17th.[26]

Notes

[1]Sterling F. Delano, "Thoreau's Visit to Brook Farm," *Thoreau Society Bulletin* 221–222 (Fall 1997–Winter 1998): 1–2.

[2]In his Journal, Emerson records that he had visited Brook Farm sometime earlier that year. "I was at Brook Farm," he writes in part, "and had a cheerful time. . . . Fine weather, cheerful uplands, & every person you meet is a character & in free costume" (*Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. William H. Gilman and J. E. Parsons, [Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1970]: 8: 428).

[3]The Fitchburg Railroad was under construction at the time. An item on the second page of the Boston *Evening Transcript* of December 19, 1843—about a fortnight after Thoreau's visit to Brook Farm—reports that, "THE FITCHBURG RAILROAD will be opened to Waltham tomorrow, the first train to leave Charlestown at 9-1/2, morning." Not until six months later would the railroad reach Concord. (See footnote 7, below.)

[4]Ellery Channing, writing to Margaret Fuller's mother on November 30th, had noted that Thoreau was at home and looked "fresh and dry" (Raymond R. Borst, *The Thoreau Log: A Documentary Life of Henry D. Thoreau* [Woodbridge, Conn.: G. K. Hall & Co., 1992], p. 102). Yet Walter Harding states that Thoreau had been "in poor health [when he was on Staten Island]. There seems to be every indication that his tuberculosis had flared up again the previous winter. . . . On his way to Staten Island he had caught a new cold and became ill enough to be confined to the 'Snuggery' for most of the month of May. . . . Even as late as August he counted himself 'with the innumerable army of invalids'" (*The Days of Henry Thoreau: A Biography* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965], p. 152).

[5]The letter says, in part, "I was at Woonsocket safely, & safely at Providence, and mean to go at 1-1/2 P.M. to Newburyport" (Ralph L. Rusk, *Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson in Six Volumes* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1939], 3:228). A footnote reads, "On Nov. 8, 1843, Bailey E. Borden wrote Emerson from Woonsocket, asking a lecture there just before or just after the engagement at Providence [on 6 December]. Emerson's endorsement shows he promised to come on Dec. 7, or, by early notice, on the 5th. . . " (*Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 3:228 *n*439).

[6]Harding (*Days of Henry Thoreau*, p. 156) states simply that "he left for Staten Island on December 3." Delano and Harding probably specify the 3rd of December because on that date Sophia Hawthorne, in a note, had asked Thoreau to deliver a letter to J. L. O'Sullivan, editor of *The Democratic Review*, in New York, "& if it be convenient for you, to carry my letters to Boston" (quoted in Borst, *Thoreau Log*, p. 102). Thoreau might have left Concord on Sunday the 3rd or on Monday the 4th. If he did not leave Concord on either of those days it is hard to see why Sophia Hawthorne would have asked him to take her letters to Boston, when by simply being posted in Concord they would have been in Boston the next day.

[7]The first train on the Fitchburg Railroad, then under construction, did not reach Concord until the following June—June 17, 1844, to be exact.

[8]Robert Ball Edes, "Weather Diary for Boston and Charlestown, Mass. 1841–1851" (typed transcript), Vault A100, Unit 3, William Munroe Special Collections, Concord Free Public Library. Used with permission; (2) Jonathan Patten Hall's published register of temperature and precipitation (Jonathan P. Hall, "Register of the Thermometer for 36 Years, from 1821 to 1856, to Which Is Added the Quantity of Rain Falling in Boston, Mass., for 34 Years, from 1823 to 1856," *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, N.S., 6, no. 2 [1857]: p. 278); (3) Robert Treat Paine, "Robert Treat Paine Manuscript Weather Journal," National Archives and Records Administration, Waltham, Massachusetts; (4) James Jackson, "James Jackson's Weather Journal in the Meteorological Records of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," Houghton Library, Harvard University (fMS Am 1361 [19]). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University; (5) Enoch Hale, "Dr. Enoch Hale's Observation Records in the Meteorological Records of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," Houghton Library, Harvard University (fMS Am 1362 [1] and fMS Am 1362 [2]). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University; and (6) "Anonymous Meteorological Journal in the Meteorological Records of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," Houghton Library, Harvard University (fMS Am 1361 [24]). By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. In the last source, the "Nature" of the precipitation is described as "Snow," and the amount is rendered as "rain" "After Melting."

[9]The record for Worcester, referred to below, mentions a snow squall on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 5th.

[10]The data for Watertown and Framingham are on microfilm in the National Archives and Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts; those for Lowell are on microfilm in the collections of the Lowell Historical Society; those for East Bridgewater appear in Leonard Hill, *Meteorological and Chronological Register. . . .* (Plymouth, Mass.: By the Author, 1869); and those for Worcester are in the Annual Report for 1843 of the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester.

[11]"Register of the Weather," *Annual Report of the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester for the Year 1843*, p. 108. The accompanying annotation, "0.55 in. of rain," represents the liquid equivalent of the melted snow.

[12]*Meteorological and Chronological Register*, p. 228. Hill summarizes the month of December as "cold and stormy."

[13]"Diary of the Reverend Theodore Edson," Lowell Historical Society, Lowell, Massachusetts. Microfilm housed in the Center for Lowell History, University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Quoted with the permission of the Lowell Historical Society.

[14]This suggests that Thoreau would have been traveling into the storm—if, in fact, he had somehow made it to a train station and if, in fact, any train he might have boarded could have negotiated the intensifying storm.

[15]Boston *Evening Transcript*, December 7, 1843, page [2].

[16]Boston *Evening Transcript*, December 8, 1843, page [2].

[17]Boston *Daily Advertiser*, December 9, 1843, page [2].

[18]Providence *Daily Journal*, December 9, 1843, page 2.

[19]Hartford *Courant*, December 8, 1843, page [2].

[20]New York *Daily Tribune*, December 8, 1843, page [2].

[21]New York *Daily Tribune*, December 11, 1843, page [2].

[22]West Roxbury has since been absorbed by the City of Boston.

[23]*Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 8:433.

[24]*Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 3:231.

[25]Odell Shepard, *Pedlar's Progress: The Life of Bronson Alcott* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1937), p. 380.

[26]Borst, *Thoreau Log*, p.103, cites Emerson's letter of December 17 to his brother William, which says, in part, "Henry Thoreau brings me his letter from you. . . ."

THINGS OF NOTE

Tom Potter

Personalities, progress, and activities are the items of the day. I have much to tell you about in this brief column, each deserving much more comment than space allows.

First I want to express my appreciation to Dick Schneider for his many tasks well done this past year as he served as editor of the *Saunterer* and at the same time chaired the Committee on Nominations and Elections. Both jobs required enormous amounts of time. In addition, Dick has been a long-time member of the Board of Directors of the TS. There are other tasks that he has cheerfully and quietly carried out and for that I both want to thank him and bring his efforts to your attention. Dick's work reflects that of many others who serve on the board or otherwise volunteer to help the Thoreau Society achieve its varied goals.

Thanks to those who have continued to support the Society with their financial response to our Annual Appeal. This year we are taking a new approach by adding several mailings to make sure that we reach all members with the word about the challenge by the Finance Committee to reduce our operating deficit. A group of Indiana members volunteered several days of work to see that we got the appeal out in a timely and financially responsible way, saving about $700.00 in the process. In addition, a number of other volunteers from around Concord and elsewhere participated in a phone-a-thon to contact past members encouraging them to renew there memberships. It worked!

We have several up-coming events that will reflect the quality of scholarship and energy that the Society is putting forward to get Henry's message out. As usual the Annual Gathering will be held in Concord in July with a number of informative and inspiring talks and activities. Board member Dave Ganoe is again pulling together a great team to provide us with a special week. Our keynote speaker is Scott Russell Sanders, well known for his many books written from the heart in response to nature. In his most recent work, *A Personal History of Awe*, Scott cites Thoreau as the inspiration for his life's work as author and professor of Literature at Indiana University. Another event will be a regional conference to be held in Minneapolis in early October. This gathering will include a number of lectures over a three day weekend. Speakers on Thoreau's nature studies, the development of his scientific world view, and his Minnesota trip will be among the offerings. I thank board member Dale Schwie for pulling together many community resources in his hometown to make this an event to look forward to. Also in October, the Society joins with the Concord Free Public Library to open an exhibition, "Reconstructing Thoreau's World." Leslie Perrin Wilson and Bob Hudspeth are the curators.

And finally, in case you did not see my comments in an email from our database program that I sent to the membership, I again want to sing the praises of Sandy Petrulionis's new book, *To Set This World Right*. This is a marvelous examination of the abolition movement in Concord during Thoreau's time. The mysterious Helen Thoreau comes alive as an active member of the Concord community.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual Gathering.

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Notes From Concord

Mike Frederick, Executive Director

These are exciting times for The Thoreau Society. As we prepare for the Annual Gathering—Thoreau's 190th birthday celebration—we continue the process of strengthening the organization. Part of that process comes from stabilizing our fundraising to guarantee that we have the resources we need. Working together with Tom Potter and the Board, we have taken specific steps that will allow us to develop a strong fund raising operation. Furthermore, Society member Kurt Aschermann, a professional fundraiser with over 30 years of experience, has been assisting us pro bono as we develop our formal strategy.

This year's fiscal budget, which ends March 31, 2008, calls for raising an additional $25,000 to reduce our deficit to sustainable levels. To this end, we have 1) adopted a new annual appeal strategy, 2) added remittance envelopes to our publications, 3) updated our advertising rates, 4) conducted phone-a-thons to renew lapsed members, and 5) identified donor prospects: individuals, foundations, and corporations. If you have prospects of your own in mind or would like to consider giving a gift to the Society, or would like to advertise with us, please contact me at 978.369.5319 or by email: mike.frederick@thoreausociety.org. Every bit helps. For example, if you like an article you read in this *Bulletin*, or in a future publication, consider completing the enclosed remittance envelope with a donation to the Society in the author's name.

Further funding initiatives are on the way, especially in building our membership. We will continue our phone-a-thons, as they help us to understand the needs and interests of our members as well as give us the opportunity to renew former members. Another area of potential membership growth is through library subscriptions. Currently over 200 libraries subscribe to our publications, but we can do better, and the office will develop procedures to ensure that our publications have the widest possible circulation. Meanwhile, you can help too by encouraging your library to subscribe or by purchasing a gift subscription for them. No research library is complete without a collection of the *Saunterer* and *Bulletin* (the *Bulletin*, by the way, was nominated for general excellence by *Utne Magazine* in 2003). We will begin a high school outreach program by inviting them to become institutional members. Teachers and school administrators interested in this option should contact the office. Forms for general membership and subscriptions are located at www.shopatwaldenpond.org.

Besides implementing our fund raising strategy, we are also preparing for this year's Gathering: "'*Simplify, simplify': Thoreau's Timeless Message*," which will prove to be an exciting event in several ways, two of which I will highlight. Since the earliest Gatherings, Society members have had a great interest in Thoreauviana (i.e. objects of interest to Thoreau enthusiasts), such as *John Thoreau & Co* pencils, first editions of *Walden*, and Herbert Gleason photographs. This year the list expands, as Thoreau Society member Frank Spizuoco unveils his collection of Bert Call (1866-1965) photographs at the Emerson Umbrella. Call was a professional photographer working from 1886 until the mid-twentieth century. His work covers much of the same Maine terrain as Thoreau traveled, and includes, as Spizuoco says, "sweeping views of spectacular mountain and lake scenes all recorded by Bert's keen, observing eye." The photos are on loan from the Dexter Historical Society in Maine.

This year, we are also proud to welcome Keynote Speaker Scott Russell Sanders, Distinguished Professor of English at Indiana University. If you have never been to a Gathering before, consider coming this year. Professor Sanders is author of nineteen books, most recently *A Private History of Awe* (2006). His website, www.scottrussellsanders.com, lists more of his books and several literary distinctions he has received, including the Lannan Literary Award (1995), the Kenyon Review Award for Literary Excellence, the PEN Syndicated Fiction Award, and the John Burroughs Essay Award. He has been honored by the American Library Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and his work has been selected for *The Best American Essays*. His keynote address is titled, "Simplicity and Sanity."

Finally, the Gathering will feature a number of workshops, discussion groups, presentations, and walks, as well as a birthday celebration sponsored by Walden University, a picnic at the Thoreau Birth House sponsored by the Thoreau Farm Trust, a panel sponsored by the Emerson Society, and our fourth-annual open house at the international headquarters of the Thoreau Society, in Concord, Massachusetts. For the latest information, please visit us at www.thoreausociety.org.

Yes, our mission makes a difference!

Jim Hayden, Director of Marketing and Public Relations

Well, after a mild early winter, the pond finally froze up and "real" winter hit us—and stayed for a while. Spring has returned, and as I write this from the shop at Walden Pond, a light, warm zephyr is playing across Walden and through the open window. As Henry wrote in his journal on April 30, 1852, "The season advances by fits & starts you would not believe that there could be so many degrees to it— If you have had foul & cold weather still some advance has been made as you find when the fair weather comes—new liferungs of warmth & summeriness—which make yesterday seem far off—& the dog days or mid-summer incredibly nearer."

With those days seeming nearer, we have begun working on new designs for shirts and will finally have our long-awaited new line of bumper stickers ready for sale soon. We have been working with "green" companies to ensure that all our products are environmentally friendly, and that has slowed down production a bit. You can always see and order the latest products from the shop on our website: www.shopatwaldenpond.org.

As the year progresses, we are wrapping up our annual "Window on Walden" program of authors, illustrators, poets, and photographers. This year we welcomed area poets for a Spring Equinox program, illustrator John Roman, author Michael Sperber, MD, Dr. Sandra Petrulionis, and others. The presentations were all very well attended, and the discussions were lively. We will also host a series of programs this fall in conjunction with the Thoreau Society's joint exhibition with the Concord Free Public Library, "Reconstructing Thoreau's World." The series will be held at the Masonic Hall. Watch for an announcement as soon as plans are complete. (continued on p. 14)

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We are also planning for the annual "Thoreau Society Katahdin Excursion" to Baxter State Park in August. This five-day camping trip has become very popular, with several Thoreauvians returning each year. Last year we moved to the north end of the park and explored the area of Trout Brook, Grand Lake Matagamon and the Traveller Mountains. The area proved so popular that we will return there this year. Days of hiking, canoeing, sauntering, swimming, fishing, or just relaxing are coupled with good food and great conversation by the fire to make this trip a memorable event.

Of course we are also looking forward to welcoming many of you to Concord in July. This year, we will again set up a satellite shop in the Masonic Hall during the Annual Gathering. We are working on many new items to coincide with this year's theme of "Simplify, Simplify." We will have shirts, prints, bumper stickers, and a new oval sticker—all sporting Thoreau's timeless admonition. There will be no Annual Gathering t-shirt, but we will have a good supply of our regular "Simplify" shirts available.

If you are coming to Concord, please let us know, or at least stop by the Shop and say hi. You can always call us or email us as well. We look forward to talking with you anytime.

From Thoreau's Journal, April 29, 1852

The art of life—of a poets life is—not having any thing to do, to do something.

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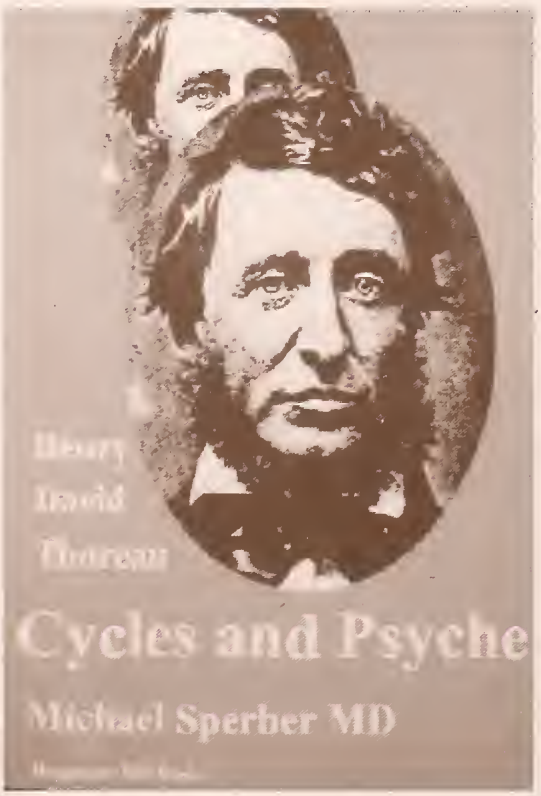

Elegantly written and filled with surprising insights, Dr. Sperber's book adds a new chapter to our understanding of Thoreau. For those like myself, who have a knee-jerk reaction against psychological reductionism, be reassured—it is this doctor's erudition that makes this medicine go down.

Alan A. Stone, M.D.,
Touroff-Glueck Professor of Law and Psychiatry,
Harvard University

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We are indebted to the following individuals for information used in this Bulletin: Victor Carl Friesen, Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, Michael A. Southwood, Leslie Perrin Wilson, and Richard Winslow, III. Please keep your editor informed of items not yet added and new items as they appear.

Notes & Queries

We thank the authors who contributed to this issue: **Steve Grice** is a professor in the Department of Literature & Languages at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee; **Bob Maker** lives in New Bedford and is working on a book about Thoreau's visits to the area. He may be reached at noyes.maker@verizon.net; **Edmund A. Schofield** is a botanist and Director of Education at Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston, Mass.; **Albert J. von Frank** is Emeritus Professor of English at Washington State University.

Coming Events: The Thoreau Society will be a partner in two events in the fall of 2007. First, on October 5 and 6, we join with The Minneapolis Athenaeum to present a program, "Henry David Thoreau: His Journey To the Twenty-First Century." The event will be held at the Minneapolis Public Library and will feature, among others, talks by Leslie Perrin Wilson, Dale Schwie, and Corinne H. Smith. Then on October 12, the Society joins the Concord Free Public Library to open an exhibition at the Library, "Reconstructing Thoreau's World." This exhibition will draw on the extensive collections of both the Library and the Society. Visitors will see Thoreau's original survey of Walden Pond, a variety of original letters and photographs that trace the discovery by Roland Robbins of the Thoreau house site at the pond and the discovery of the bean field by Bradley P. Dean. There will be original photographs by Alfred Winslow Hosmer and Herbert Gleason as well as images by N. C. Wyeth. We will have more detailed information on both events in the Summer issue of the *Bulletin*. Do mark your calendars!

Ed Schofield draws our attention to the formation of "Friends of Thoreau Country," an organization formed earlier this year, whose immediate aim is to preserve "Deep Cut Woods" (Thoreau's name for a section of Walden Woods) and whose longer aim is to convince the Town of Concord not to put proposed soccer fields there. For detailed information, visit their website, www.friendsofthoreaucountry.org.

Thoreau's Path on Brister's Hill, created by the Walden Woods Project, is a self-guided interpretive trail in the heart of Walden Woods. The Path has won a Boston Society of Landscape Architects Merit awarded presented to Sasaki Associates, who with Mass. Audubon designed the project.

The Thoreau Society is a co-recipient of two awards of excellence in two separate national art exhibitions. The awards are for artwork produced under a Thoreau Society Fellowship

awarded in 2003 to artist/illustrator John Roman. Roman's re-creation of Concord as it appeared during Thoreau's time was honored in competitions held in Los Angeles, by the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles, and in New York, by the New York Society of Illustrators.

Chris Dodge, who has been responsible for many items in this column for several years, has established an on-line journal, *Thoreau Today*. Visit it at http://www.geocities.com/thoreaulogy.

Laryssa Duncan and **Corinne H. Smith** note a cartoon in the March-April issue of *Yankee Magazine* that is uncomfortably apt. Thoreau holds his house above a globe and says "What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" (from his letter to H. G. O. Blake, May 20, 1860).

Joel Myerson unearthed this curiously phrased comment in Joe Bennett, *A Land of Two Halves* (New York: Scribner, 2004): "Travel is solipsistic. It snaps the threads of the news. And it teaches that any news you need to know will reach you somehow. The rest is mere titillation. 'If we read,' wrote the notable hermit and occasional dingbat Thoreau, 'of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter—then we need never read of another. One is enough.'"

Victor Carl Friesen presented a paper on "Man, Nature and God: Some Literary Considerations, Particularly Those of Thoreau" at a conference of the Brock University Philosophy Society in April 2006 at St. Catharines, Ontario.

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The *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, published quarterly by the Thoreau Society, is indexed in *American Humanities Index* and *MLA International Bibliography*.

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Established in 1941, the **Thoreau Society, Inc.**, is an international nonprofit organization with a mission to honor Henry David Thoreau by stimulating interest in and fostering education about his life, works, and philosophy and his place in his world and ours; by encouraging research on his life and writings; by acting as a repository for Thoreauviana and material relevant to Henry David Thoreau; and by advocating for the preservation of Thoreau Country. Membership in the Society includes subscriptions to its two publications, the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* (published quarterly) and *The Concord Saunterer* (published annually). Society members receive a ten-percent discount on all merchandise purchased from the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond and advance notice about Society programs, including the Annual Gathering.

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